

**U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON**

**Commerce,  
Science, and  
Transportation**

**ERNEST F. HOLLINGS, Chairman**  
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**Statement of Chairman Hollings**

**Hearing on Aviation Security in Transition**

**July 25, 2002**

Good morning. We created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) last November to change entirely the way our nation provides aviation security. We made fundamental changes, demanding a focus on security and recognizing that as a country we were at war. We asked you to create from nothing a well trained, motivated work force to screen everything going on-board passenger aircraft, and to address other parts of the aviation community -- general aviation, cargo, flight schools, for example -- as quickly and effectively as possible. No one here, and I think you would agree, wants to see these programs and initiatives delayed.

In providing difficult deadlines, we wanted to make sure that everyone understood that our security is a top priority. You have met many of the early challenges, but many remain, and it must continue to be a top priority. You have two pending deadlines looming -- November 19 (screeners) and December 31 (explosive detection systems). I want you to keep your foot on the gas pedal, and don't let up. Where there are a few airports with specific problems, tell us -- you have a mandate to get the

job done, and to do it right. The law gives you that ability and direction.

Do not use the budget as an excuse – yes, the Supplemental cuts your funding somewhat, but Mr. Danials asked for more than \$219 million in cuts. You received much of what you requested for this year.

You have told us all year you will make the deadlines, and we have supported your efforts. You also told us "No" to guns. Now, I see that you may "reconsider" – under the original bill, we gave you discretion to allow guns or even less than lethal weapons, tasers, in the cockpit. You said no. I agree with you.

Under the Act, we also mandated that the cockpit doors be locked at all times during flight except for authorized personnel. I want to close the door and lock it for the entire flight. I understand, though, that right now there are a series of measures on board to make sure that if one pilot leaves the cockpit, the integrity of the cockpit is not breached. That is a good first step, but as I look at new designs for kevelar strips as a second door, or other relatively easy fixes to the cockpit, I want you to order the deployment of those doors and devices. If we had another billion to spend, which is the initial cost of arming the pilots, we could spend it more wisely on new doors. To ensure that terrorists are unable to take control of an aircraft I introduced, S. 2497, a bill that requires cockpit doors remain closed while in flight unless the plane is fitted with mantrap doors that provide secure entrance and egress to the flight deck. My legislation would bring us in line with the Israeli approach, a layered "onion" of security, that allows the pilots to focus on flying, and keeps potential threats out of the cockpit.

You will need to lay out for us the time frames you envision to hire all of the screeners -- right now you have about 2,500 on payroll, and another 4,000 about to be hired, as I understand it. You want to have on board 35,000 by November. How do you get there? Can you get there?

With respect to the December 31 deadline, you have bought about 800 of the 1100 explosive detection systems (EDS) and a substantial number of the smaller trace detection units. We can not

discuss the differences in open session, but we all recognize there are substantial differences in cost, time and personnel. You also will need to make substantial changes to a number of airports, and have hired Boeing, along with Siemens to carry out that mission. As I said, for some airports, you may need some additional time -- take it and do it right. For others, deploy it, man it and run it.

It has been difficult to communicate with the TSA from the start, and while I am certain that conditions will improve under Admiral Loy's leadership, I must make it very clear that Congress wants to know the truth. Congress is here and we are listening. We do not want to hear that there is a problem implementing security from the airports or an airline -- we want to hear it from you. Far too much is at stake to play games at a time like this.

There may have been some changes in the faces at TSA, but the challenge remains the same -- to develop a system of security which justifiably restores the confidence of the American people. We continue to expect this challenge to be met. I implore you to work with us, and provide straightforward assessments of your efforts as you move forward. Without proper communication, questions and doubts will continue to shroud the TSA, and no doubt will hinder your ability to be successful in this most important of missions.

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